

Oops

CONSUMER NEWS incorrectly reported that Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) had become the new Community Services Administration (CSA) under Health, Education & Welfare Dept. (HEW). Although OEO is now CSA, it is not yet a part of HEW & will not be until & unless the President's reorganization plan is approved by Congress. The President is to submit the plan to Congress after March 15.

consumer news

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
Office of Consumer Affairs
Virginia H. Knauer, Director

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Public hearings on train service

Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) once again wants to hear from consumers about Federal plans to change passenger & freight train services in 20 states & District of Columbia. A year ago ICC's Rail Services Planning Office (RSPO) had public hearings about Transportation Dept.'s recommendation for a 25% cut in train routes & service in the northeast & midwest & to provide 70% funding for commuter train service operated by state or local governments [CONSUMER NEWS: March 1, 1974]. Hearings this month will be an opportunity for consumers, local communities, businesses & unions to comment on U.S. Railway Association's preliminary plan for restructuring bankrupt railroads (Ann Arbor, Central of New Jersey, Erie Lackawanna, Lehigh & Hudson River, Lehigh Valley, Penn Central & Reading) & discounting rail service in certain areas. Copies of the association's preliminary report are available for review in ICC field offices. A free copy is available from U.S. Railway Association, 2100 2nd St. SW, Washington, DC 20595.

Hearings will be in 23 cities March 17 through March 26 at 9:30 a.m. RSPO is providing free legal assistance for consumers & others to help them prepare their statements. For more information about hearings & assistance, contact one of the following ICC coordinators.

If you cannot appear at a hearing, send your comments (based on the railway association's preliminary report) to Rail Services Planning Office, 1900 L St. NW, Washington, DC 20036, by March 28. Send 6 copies on 8½x11-inch (22x28 centimeters) paper. For further information, contact RSPO at the above address, or call 202-254-3292.

Amtrak & Auto-Train

Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) has scheduled public hearings in New York & Chicago to study the quality of intercity rail passenger service & whether changes should be made. ICC will study the performance of Amtrak & Auto-Train Corp. & other firms operating train passenger service.

Locations & dates of the hearings are as follows:

Court Room No. 4
U.S. Customs Court
1 Federal Plaza
New York, NY
9:30 a.m. March 4

Room 705
640 S. Canal St.
Chicago, IL
9:30 a.m. March 11

Each hearing is scheduled to last 3 or 4 days. Hearings also will be held in other cities across the country, but dates have not been set.

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(continued on back page of
Consumer Comment forms)

Where does all the energy go?

When you think of energy products, you probably remember the basics—gasoline, diesel fuel, jet fuel & heating oil. But an array of consumer products depends on petrochemicals—the chemical compounds made from petroleum resources.

As a consumer, you probably do not recognize most petrochemical products as such. Industries use petrochemical products as raw materials to make the products that you do recognize & buy—such as plastics, synthetic fibers, medicines & adhesives.

To help you understand the widespread uses of energy natural resources, CONSUMER NEWS has developed lists of common products made petrochemicals. With these clues, it's easy to see how higher energy costs affect the entire economy, including your pocketbook.

Petrochemicals are made from 3 forms of energy: oil, coal & natural gas. All 3 energy forms consist of a mixture of substances containing hydrogen & carbon, which are called "hydrocarbons." Coal is the solid form of energy. Oil is the liquid form. Natural gas is the gaseous form.

This listing of the 3 forms of energy includes the major products of each that are used as raw materials in making consumer products.

Oil

Crude oil—or unrefined oil—can be refined into a number of basic products, all of which can be further refined into chemical compounds used to make consumer products. On this page are product categories of oil & some of the consumer products derived from each:

• ASPHALT

- paving, surfacing & construction materials
- base for paints, lacquers, inks & roofing compounds
- road oils
- waterproofings
- rubber substitutes

• WAXES (paraffin & micro-crystalline

- paper manufacturing
- sanitary containers
- waxed wrappers
- candle making
- matches
- drugs & cosmetics
- canning & sealing
- wax used in making candy
- chewing gum

• PETROLEUM COKE

- used in making of electrodes
- flashlight & radio batteries
- sandpaper
- special fuel (it is almost pure carbon) valuable in refining aluminum, nickel, special steels & chemicals.

LUBRICATING & SPECIAL PURPOSE OILS

- hydraulic oils
- printing oils
- transmission oils
- household lubricants
- salves & creams
- ointments & petroleum jelly
- rust-preventing compounds
- rubber softeners
- transformer oils
- connectioners oils used by bakers, fruit packers & candy makers
- cosmetics & perfumes

• SOLVENTS

- commercial solvents used in rubber, lacquer & pesticides
- thinner for paints, varnishes & lacquers
- thinner for cements & adhesives
- special solvent for dry-cleaning
- turpentine substitute

• FUEL

- liquefied petroleum gases used in cooking & heating
- motor gasoline
- aviation gasoline
- marine gasoline
- aviation kerosene (jet fuel)
- diesel fuel
- tractor fuel
- kerosene
- distillable fuel oils (lighter oils) used mostly in automatic central heating of homes & office buildings
- residual fuel oils (heavier oils) normally used to fire open-hearth furnaces, steam boilers & kilns; also used in heating large apartment & commercial buildings & in making electricity.

• GREASES

- automotive grease
- industrial grease
- cable grease

• PETROCHEMICALS

Petroleum products can also be refined into special chemical compounds used in making consumer products, including:

Synthetic fibers such as nylon, polyesters & acrylics, which are used in making clothing, upholstery fabric & rugs.

Dyestuffs & pigments used in making paint, coatings & clothing.

Plastics such as polyethylene, polystyrene & polyvinyl chloride, which are used in making bottles, bags, tubes & containers.

Synthetic rubber such as polybutadiene, which is used in making tires, belting, hose, boots & fabricated rubber products.

Many other products such as pesticides, paints, resins, anti-freeze, polishes & detergents.

Natural Gas

Natural gas is the familiar fuel we use to cook, to heat water & to heat & cool homes. It is also used as a raw material in the production of a long list of petrochemicals.

Natural gas is actually a mixture of several gases but is largely made up of a gas called methane. The following is a breakdown of the products derived from methane & other gases, which include ethane, propane & butane. Also included are products derived from carbon black, which is produced by burning oil or natural gas in the presence of enough oxygen to prevent all the carbon from being burned.

- **METHANE, ETHANE, PROPANE & BUTANE**
 - ammonia
 - nitrogen fertilizer
 - carbonation in beverages
 - adhesives
 - alkyd paints
 - explosives
 - anti-freeze
 - rubber accelerator
 - resins
 - synthetic rubber (neoprene)
 - plastics (Koroseal, Geon, Styrofoam, polyvinyl chloride, polyurethane foams, Lucite, Plexiglas)
 - water based paints
 - paper coatings
 - polyvinyl alcohol
 - refrigerants
 - aerosols for spray cans
 - cleaning solvents

- fibers (rayon, Dacron, Orlon, polyesters, nylon)
- vinegar
- D.D.T.
- solvents
- camera films
- modified polyester resins (fiber glass)
- gasoline anti-knock additive
- rubbing alcohol
- hydraulic fluids
- detergents
- cigarette filter tip component
- acrylic & epoxy resins

- **CARBON BLACK**
 - rubber reinforcing agent
 - carbon paper
 - battery cells
 - inks
 - paints
 - electrodes

Coal

Chemicals that come from coal are generally made from a process in which coal is refined into coke. This material is almost entirely carbon & is a chemical raw material for hydrogen, ethane, methane, ammonia, ethylene, hydrogen sulfide & hydrogen cyanide. At present, not much coal is used in making these chemicals because the compounds can be produced at less cost with petroleum products. However, the energy shortage may change this situation. Therefore, CONSUMER NEWS includes this list of consumer products that are or can be derived from chemical materials produced from coal.

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|------------------|
| ammonia | alcohol | synthetics |
| anti-freeze | liquid fuels | pharmaceuticals |
| fertilizer | protective coatings | insecticides |
| refrigerants | solvents | films |
| explosives | anesthetic | plastics |
| resins | | synthetic rubber |

Since this is not a complete list of all petrochemicals currently used in manufacturing, you may get additional free consumer information by writing to American Gas Association, 1515 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22209; American Petroleum Institute, 1801 K St. NW, Washington, DC 20006; & National Coal Association, 1130 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Recalls

• **ELECTROPLATED NICKEL SILVERWARE BABY CUP**—Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announces recall of "E.P. N.S. Baby Cup . . . Style 01064 . . . One Piece . . . Made in India . . ." Recalled by distributor, Prill Silver Co. Inc., New York. Distribution was nationwide. Cup contained excessive lead, which presents a lead poisoning hazard.

• **VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS**—Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announces recall of Daily Multivitamin Supplement, 100, 500, 1,000 & bulk. Lot No. 7455-1 & 7455-2. Manufactured & recalled by ICN Pharmaceuticals Inc., Cincinnati. Tablets were subpotent in Vitamin A.

• **DRY BABY CEREALS**—Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announces recall of 5 instant dry baby cereals: Instant Rice Cereal, Instant Barley Cereal, Instant Oatmeal Cereal, Instant Mixed Cereal & Instant High Protein Cereal, packed in 8 oz. (227 grams) cardboard boxes & in a combination 6-pack of 1 oz. (28 grams) boxes. All lots are being recalled by the manufacturer, H. J. Heinz Co., Pittsburgh PA. Distribution was nationwide. Consumers complained about metal fragments in the cereal.

• **CANDY PACIFIERS**—Food & Drug Administration (FDA) announces voluntary recall of 6 kinds of candy pacifiers & seizure of a 7th. Companies that have agreed to the recall—along with product's brand name, if any—are: R. L. Albert & Son Inc, Bronx, NY (Goo Goo); S. L. Kay Co. Inc, New York, NY (no brand name); Dalt International Inc, Palisades Park, NJ (Caprice); Bee Distributing Co., Los Angeles, CA (no brand name) & Ricos Bakery Snaks Hialeah, FL (Tetera). Paul Spitz Inc., Bronx, NY, an importer, has refused FDA's request to recall its product, "Lic a Nip"; 2 seizures have already been made. Although the pacifiers are labeled "Caution, not for infants," FDA says this warning does not keep products from being given to infants. Pacifiers look like ordinary pacifiers but have a candy tip mounted in or on a plastic handle. Tip may break off, thus creating a choking hazard. Distribution was nationwide. No injuries reported.

• **SEAT BELTS**—National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announces recall of more than 178,000 cars equipped with seat belts that are too small to fit around large persons, as required by the seat belt standard. Fort Motor Co. is recalling 1972 Mavericks & Comets equipped with Seat Belt Assembly No. 536.

Moving? Read on

Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) as of today is requiring moving companies to give consumers a copy of performance information filed with ICC. Movers had until today to file reports on their performance in moving household goods during 1974. (ICC extended the original deadline of Feb. 15 [CONSUMER NEWS: Sept. 1, 1974]). Each company's report is based on information supplied by consumers who had furniture & other household goods moved by an ICC licensed truck.

Each company's "report card" on itself should contain the same information that it filed with ICC, which is the following:

- Percentage of shipments picked up & delivered on time according to time designated in the shipping contract.

- Percentage of moving charges that were within 10% of the mover's estimate.

- Percentage of goods lost or damaged.

- Percentage of claims filed.

- Percentage of claims paid by the company.

Consumers should compare several estimates of moving costs & performance reports before signing a contract with a moving company. If a company does not provide the report & a questionnaire, ask for them. If they still are not available, notify ICC. Write to Household Goods Branch, Interstate Commerce Commission, Washington, DC 20423, or call 202-343-2929.

Dear Consumer

This winter the Fuel Merchants Association of New Jersey—in cooperation with the State Office on Aging & N.J. Council of Senior Citizens—has arranged credit (& suitable payment terms) for senior citizens who cannot afford to buy fuel & pay immediately. The state agency certifies an older person's need for credit.

Suburban Bank of Norristown, PA, has helped unemployed loan customers to find work. These were consumers who were behind on their loan payments to the bank.

Radio Station WRC in Washington, DC, is working with government employment agencies to publicize job openings. Once an hour, 24 hours a day, WRC broadcasts "Job Alert" as a public service. "Job Alert" gives a description of a job vacancy—position, salary & geographic location—and how to apply for the job.

All 3 of these programs are examples of people helping people who are facing economic hardship. I am sure there are more examples. I plan to compile a list of innovative people-helping-people programs & distribute the list to the press & private & public organizations across the country with the hope of inspiring others to undertake similar programs.

If you are proud of a people-helping-people program in your community—something new, something different—please tell me about it. Send your description to People-Helping-People, Office of Consumer Affairs, Washington, DC 20201.

Sincerely,

Virginia Knauer

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